

Leonard Cook

Tape 028

Interviewed by Mike Brown at the Golden Age Center, September 21, 1977
Mr. Cook resides at 3253 S. Vernal Avenue, Vernal, Utah

Mike Brown (MB): Well, so you were telling me that you helped haul those dinosaurs out here.

Leonard Cook (Leonard): Yeah.

MB: How did you guys do that? What was the story behind that?

Leonard: Well, as near as I can remember, there were about sixteen outfits that went from here to the quarry. They loaded it and then traveled in a group, you know, into Salt Lake. I think it was about sixteen days on the trip. They was some singles, but most of them were four-horse outfits. But I don't remember all their names. I knew some of them.

MB: Do you remember Mr. Kay?

Leonard: Oh yeah, he was the headman of the outfit. He took charge of the whole group. He's the one that got all us guys to come and go. He called up a bunch of us and got us to come down here. Then he got who he wanted. Old Uncle John they called him. They got a lot of pictures of him up there at the field house on his wagon and everything.

MB: Were you in the freighting business at the time?

Leonard: Yeah, we all used to freight out here. You had to freight or starve to death out here, them days.

MB: How come?

Leonard: That was the only way you could make a dollar out here, because these stores would give you an order to go to Price and haul their stuff in here, see. Well, the only gas station there was in town, the old Ashley Co-op. That's where Penney's is now. I guess that building still belongs to the old co-operated company. They had their store there. They used to haul that gas from Price with teams in fifty-gallon barrels. We had a contract there with them. We used to be steady on the road. ... In the summer time, why we'd split the team. I used to drive one of them quite a lot. I'd go with him quite a few times. But he had our contracts for a long time. Then they started freighting gas out to Rangely and he hauled it from Rangely in here for quite a while.

MB: This is your Dad?

Leonard: Yeah.

MB: How did you and your Dad get started in the freight business?

Leonard: I don't know, it just showed up that way. Dad, he used to be a carpenter, but then he'd freight. When there wasn't other work, he'd freight. Pretty nearly everybody out here had a team. They'd freight in the fall. They'd get a load of freight from these stores. That's the only way they got their stuff in here is by wagon. There was no trucks or anything.

MB: Did you guys charge by the load or by the mile?

Leonard: We got paid by the pound, one hundred weight.

MB: What kind of rates did you get for one hundred pounds? What were they paying?

Leonard: Oh, about a dollar is as much as they ever paid for one hundred pounds. That's all we got for this thing. Hauled them plumb to Salt Lake for a dollar a hundred.

MB: How much could your wagons carry?

Leonard: Oh, with the four-up you'd have about 10,000 pounds.

MB: You'd get about \$100 for that trip.

Leonard: You'd get about \$100 for making that trip.

MB: Now, when you made that trip, how did they load, like the dinosaurs out of the quarry?

Leonard: They was just done up. Well they mined them out in pieces and then that was wrapped with burlap. Well they ? at first with plaster of Paris or something over it. Then they wrapped [them] with a gunny sack and then they put plaster of Paris all over that. Then they put them in boxes, crates. Then they loaded them in the wagons.

MB: Did they have block and tackle? I don't understand how they loaded that. 'Cause I know they didn't have forklifts back then.

Leonard: They just had man labor. They just put some skids up against the wagons and took the old horses and slid it up the skids onto the wagons. Yeah, that's how they done it. Like this was the wagon here. They took a couple of logs and leaned them up against the wagon like that so they wouldn't slide away. Then you'd drag--you'd take your team and drag these big boxes up here and get them started up on the end of that. Then you'd put a chain around them up over your wagon and had the team out here. You slid these boxes up these skids onto your wagon. That's the way you done it.

MB: Were they real easy? Did everything have to be delicate?

Leonard: Oh, yeah, you had to be careful, not too careful with them all done up in boxes. But you couldn't jar them around too much. The boxes, some of them, weighed about one thousand pounds or better, you know.

MB: How would you know how much your weight was? Did you have scales?

Leonard: They weighed it after we got out there, afterwards, but they docked it up there. I don't know, they had an idea about how much each one weighed. I don't know how they weighed it there, don't think they did. They just more or less guessed at it 'til they got to Salt Lake.

MB: What do you remember most about the trip?

Leonard: Oh gosh, I don't know. Just poking along the road I guess. Ha, ha. When they got out to Heber, instead of going out Parley's Canyon, let's see, Daniel's Canyon then Parley's, that way to Salt Lake, they took us plumb down around Provo Canyon around Point of the Mountain that way.

MB: I wonder why.

Leonard: I don't know. That's what I wondered. Long ways around with a team.

MB: What time of year was that?

Leonard: It was in the fall. It was about September, wasn't it?

MB: No problems with the weather or anything?

Leonard: It was pretty good weather. Along in September somewhere.

MB: Did you have any problems on that trip? Was it smooth sailing all the way?

Leonard: We all traveled in a big bunch.

MB: Did families go too?

Leonard: Oh, no. Just a bunch of men. There was no place for women and kids on that.

Unidentified woman: I don't suppose they had very much to eat.

Leonard: They just camped out. Hell, they didn't have tents, they just camped out. Put their bed

on the ground and had a campfire. That's all there was to it.

MB: Was that fun or was that hard work?

Leonard: Well, I don't know. Damned hard work; it's pretty rough.

MB: I'll bet you enjoyed that though, didn't you?

Leonard: I guess so, we didn't know any better.

MB: So what happened when you guys got to Salt Lake?

Leonard: Oh, they trailed us up to Salt Lake, right up Main Street. They took us up to the university, that's where they took us. After we got unloaded, why then it was you for yourself and the devil for the rest of you. They turned us loose and we got out of Salt Lake. Some went one way and some went the other. We all headed for home. We didn't stay in a group—sent them home. Some of them stayed in Salt Lake a while. Some of them went looking around, others come home.

MB: I heard there was quite a celebration in Salt Lake or a parade.

Leonard: Oh, they made a big old parade out of it. Hells fire, they had everybody in Salt Lake along the roads. They were right up Main Street, on up ?. It was up to the university. They had all kinds of doings there.

MB: Did they present you with anything? Did Mr. Kay get all the recognition since he was the leader?

Leonard: Well, I don't know that he got more than anybody else. After they got it there, he went back out there. He stayed out there for a long time, 'til they put it together. They put some of it together. Let ? this guy ?. I think it was...

MB: Golden?

Leonard: I think he was a brother-in-law or he was Kay's son-in-law. I don't know which.

MB: I know they were related somehow there.

Leonard: It's ? married a Kay. I don't know whether it was Kay's sister or Kay's daughter. I don't remember and never found out. It might have been old Kay's daughter.

MB: Did you know Mr. Kay pretty good?

Leonard: Oh, yeah.

MB: What was he like?

Leonard: Oh, he was a pretty nice old feller. We lived neighbors to him and ?. Yeah, Mr. Kay was a pretty nice feller. Everybody liked him. They all called him Uncle John.

MB: Uncle John. Did you ever work out to the quarry?

Leonard: No. I never did work for him.

MB: Maybe you could tell me more about the freighting down to Price? What route would you take going down to Price?

Leonard: Oh, most generally we went over Indian Canyon. We went up over Indian Canyon, all the way up over Indian Canyon and then ? down through Helper and then to Price that way.

MB: Did you ever go through Nine-Mile?

Leonard: Yeah, we'd go through Nine-Mile way in the winter. There wasn't quite as much snow that way. It wasn't such a high mountain that way as you had through Myton and down through there. Didn't have any high range this other way. You had pretty high mountains over Indian Canyon.

MB: How long a trip would that be?

Leonard: Oh it would take about twelve days generally, round trip. In the fall we used to haul lucern seed out, alfalfa seed. When we got that a-going we'd take loads of alfalfa seed to Price. Then freight back to the stores.

MB: Were you generally loaded both ways?

Leonard: No, only in the fall, after we got that alfalfa seed. That Peppard Seed Company, they got to raising alfalfa seed here and over on the reservation. That ran for quite a little while they had their plant over to Roosevelt. We used to load up there and take that seed into the railroad.

MB: Who were you working for? Who did you haul for?

Leonard: Oh, just any store that wanted a load run in. There was Ashton's and the Co-op and some of those outfits, you know.

MB: Who was running the Co-op back then?

Leonard: There was a company out there. They had different ones in there. They'd have a guy in there and then old Charlie Carter was there for a while. Oh, gosh, I don't know. Harmon Sowards was a guy that was in charge of this gas deal. The Soward's outfit that runs this... The old man, he died a few years ago. He used to haul it from Continental. Get the gas out of Continental is where they brought it from.

MB: Did you haul for him?

Leonard: My Dad had a contract with them to haul gas. I used to go with him quite a bit. I used to go in the summer. I was just a kid then.

MB: Were you a pretty young man when they had that dinosaur trip?

Leonard: I was twenty, twenty-two was it?

Mrs. Cook: Twenty-two.

Leonard: I believe that was right.

MB: How did your family happen to come here to Vernal?

Leonard: Well, my Dad come from England. They come across the ocean when he just a pretty young kid when he was six or seven years old. He came with his mother and his sister. They joined the [Mormon] church in England and they crossed the plains with a handcart outfit and came to Salt Lake. They lived in Salt Lake. He lived in that country 'til he grewed up. Then my mother, her folks came from England, but she was born in Utah. They was married and lived out around Wallsburg, Provo and Wallsburg, and then they came out this way. They had some family when they moved out here, but quite a lot of us was born out here. They came out here looking for more ground or something.

MB: Do you know about when they came out here?

Leonard: When did they come out here? Have you got it down in the book?

MB: Did they come out here and homestead?

Leonard: Well, they didn't homestead here then. They just came out here and bought a piece of ground. They bought a little piece of ground right down this road and over on the next street and lived there for a long time. Then they bought a place over in Naples. That's where they lived most of the time. Then my mother died. I was only about two years old when she died. I don't remember her. They lived around there 'til he died off. We were scattered around; there is quite a bunch of us.

MB: What was your dad's name?

Leonard: John, John Cook. Yeah, there was about eight of us boys and two girls. One girl lived here, stayed here and lived around here and on the reservation, they homesteaded over there, then they come back. The other girl, she went to Canada. They lived in Canada and then in Washington about all their lives. The rest of us are scattered around. Some of us near the reservation and some in Salt Lake, some in Price. Some of us stayed here. There is only two of us, two boys and one girl, she lives in Washington. She's about ninety years old. There's only about one boy that's left here.

MB: Do you remember World War I here?

Leonard: Oh, yeah.

MB: How did that affect the town? Did any of your family have to go?

Leonard: No they kind of hit in between. I wasn't quite old enough. Brother just older than me, he was about old enough. He registered he was just about ready to go and it quit. I don't know. Some of the other boys got married and, let's see, there is one or two a little older that pass or something. I don't know what the deal was. Then, no, I was only about sixteen then.

MB: Do you remember the flu epidemic?

Leonard: Oh, boy, I'll say.

MB: Can you tell me about that?

Leonard: That wiped out a lot of them, I'll tell you. Lot of people died in that.

MB: What was that like? I have no idea.

Leonard: Oh, it was kind of a funny thing. Oh, it seemed like big, old, healthy people died. Died in the prime of life twenty-five, thirty years old. Boy, it just knocked them off like flies. A bunch of those guys died out to the Gilsonite mines. A healthy bunch of fellows died out there. That damn thing hit 'em and they were sleeping out there in those bunkhouses. Gosh, one of her cousins died out there. He was about twenty, you know. Dodds, Hullinger and Mott guys around here. I guess a lot of them died out there.

MB: Was it real quick?

Mrs. Cook: I think it was real quick. One time I figured I was coming down with it and it would scare you to death if you knew you was coming down with it, you know. My mother had the horse and buggy. She thought she'd run up to my sister's place and I just watched for her to come

and I figgered that was the end of it. That night I went plumb out of my head. It just happened that fast. I didn't know anything and it lingered on for quite a while.

MB: Did you have it?

Leonard: Yeah, I had it. I was too damned ornery to die.

Mrs. Cook: We weren't married then.

Leonard: I was just a kid.

MB: What was your name?

Mrs. Cook: Slaugh. Quite a common name. Do you know Ben Slaugh that goes to the dances all the time?

MB: Are you Iva's sister?

Mrs. Cook: Yes.

MB: Now, I've been over to Iva's a couple of times.

Leonard: Yes, she's the oldest one in the family.

Mrs. Cook: She's a pioneer, isn't she?

MB: Oh, I consider everyone a pioneer.

Mrs. Cook: Oh, do you?

MB: Yes.

Mrs. Cook: She's a little extra pioneer.

Leonard: She still pioneers it.

Mrs. Cook: She still pioneers it. She has it rough.

MB: Yeah, she does at that. Well then, did you ever work with her husband, Joe? She told me that Joe was a freighter.

Leonard: Yeah, we used to make lots of trips to Price and back.

MB: Tell me something about Joe then. She told me a little about him.

Leonard: Oh, he was just a big, old, easygoing feller. He was good-natured. It didn't make any difference whether today was tomorrow or the next day. It was all the same to him. He was great old lover of horses. He always had good horses. He was a pretty good guy.

MB: You know, Iva told me about meeting Joe at the Orpheus or the Imperial. Now, did you two go there?

Mrs. Cook: Some called it the Orpheus and some the Imperial.

MB: Did you two go there?

Mrs. Cook: We stayed more out in the country.

Leonard: ? he's, what is he? He's about twelve, fourteen years older than us.

Mrs. Cook: He's eleven years older than I am.

Leonard: When they was doing their running around, why we were staying home minding our business.

Mrs. Cook: Reading books.

MB: What did you guys do for entertainment when you were young?

Mrs. Cook: Every week we had a ward dance, you know, and we had Mutual.

Leonard: The church used to have a dance, picture shows. They had a lot of picture shows.

Mrs. Cook: And then my father, he used to read a lot to us kids at home, you know, and we'd just sit around there in the evening. We listened to the stories. He'd get these books and read them to the family. My mother would sit and sew usually or crochet and he'd read these stories and that was about our entertainment.

MB: So, you were in Glines or Davis Ward?

Mrs. Cook: Davis Ward.

MB: Now, did Davis Ward put on these picture shows, too?

Leonard: No, no. When we got big enough to go on our own, chasin' around together, pretty near every ward had their own church house. They had their own dance. About every ward had a dance every week, kids in the ward. Then they had the schoolhouse in town. When we was kids, I had a buggy and a horse. We used to go to the shows and dances here and there and mess

around. I just kind of bummed around when I was a kid. ? that nobody wanted.

My dad, he had so damn many kids, he was left with that whole big herd. I guess when I was little they kind of passed me around from one to the other. Then after I got big enough to look out for myself, I went around from people to people. I lived over by where the dam is now. My brother-in-law lived there, right where the dam comes out to the orchard. I was just a big kid. I stayed over there with him.

MB: Who was he?

Leonard: Joe Herbert.

MB: Joe Herbert.

Leonard: Uh-huh. I had an old buggy. I bought me a new buggy and I ? to drive from there plumb out to Davis Ward. She lived way out here.

Mrs. Cook: He'd come out there and see me.

Leonard: A ten mile drive out and about that many back.

MB: That was quite a long courtship, wasn't it?

Mrs. Cook: Quite a long trip.

Leonard: I told her, "Hell almighty!" I didn't think she was worth that much now.

MB: When you were a kid, did you ever get into orneryness? Did you ever play tricks on people, pranks or anything?

Mrs. Cook: Yes, I've heard of quite a few. I don't know whether he wants to admit it or not.

MB: It's history now. So you can tell me.

Leonard: Oh, I don't know.

Mrs. Cook: I was thinking of one time. His father married another lady after his mother died and they got a little boy. He took and give a frog to the little boy and told him to put it in his mother's lap. He did.

MB: This was a brand new mother then?

Mrs. Cook: This was a brand new mother.

Leonard: Yeah, she was awful scared of toads. I got that off good. I gave him a nickel or

something to put that toad in his mother's lap. Ha-Ha. I took off about the time the excitement started.

Mrs. Cook: I'll bet you did.

Leonard: I was no where to be found.

MB: What other kind of things like that did you do?

Leonard: We were just a bunch of rough necks. Us kids just had horses. Every kid in the country then had a pony, you know. I don't remember when I didn't have a horse. My dad gave me a horse as far back as I can remember. I believe I remember the first one. He gave me a little bald face colt. Hell, I was so little I couldn't ride it. ? I got to riding it. I had a horse ever since. I don't remember ever being without a horse.

Mrs. Cook: I don't suppose you have. He's got his old horse over in the field now.

Leonard: I have horses and saddles around here now.

MB: Do you still ride?

Mrs. Cook: No, he doesn't ride.

Leonard: Oh, I ain't rode much in quite a while. Would do if...

MB: You heard about Ralph down at the center, didn't you? His horse fell on him this weekend.

Leonard: Who?

MB: Ralph Siddoway.

Leonard: Oh yeah, horse fell on him.

MB: He's out in the hospital in Salt Lake, broke it in eight places.

Mrs. Cook: Well for Pete's sake.

Leonard: He fell down.

Mrs. Cook: I'd think he would be in bad shape.

MB: They put him back together, I guess. It happened this Saturday. It will be a while.

Leonard: That boy of mine, lives right over here. He's riding horses around here. He got on one of them broncs the other day. I rode him quite a few times, but he reared over backwards with him on the highway. Hell, pretty near got him. If he hadn't've slipped off the side it would have got his leg. His leg's black and blue from his hip plumb to his foot.

MB: He's lucky he didn't break it.

Leonard: Yeah, it's a wonder he didn't. It's a wonder it didn't catch him under the saddle. Then the next day after he got out of that, she threwed him off the next day. Ha-ha. Busted him up some more so, he got some kids to ride it. Some kid ? and then his sister, she rides, too, so they got her down there and they ?

MB: When you guys first got married what did you do?

Mrs. Cook: We moved around.

Leonard: Well, I'll tell ya. Go ahead.

Mrs. Cook: Go ahead. You remember better than I do.

Leonard: There was only one pair that got married along the time we did that was poorer than we was and they starved plumb to death.

MB: When did you guys get married?

Mrs. Cook: In '21.

MB: In '21.

Leonard: We moved around and we kept a-goin' and a-goin'. I done everything that anybody else wouldn't.

MB: What kind of work did you do?

Leonard: I worked in the mines. I herded sheep. I punched cows. I farmed. I freighted, I done anything that come along. Anything that hard, rough work, I done it.

MC: How did the Depression affect you two?

Mrs. Cook: Well it was rough, we had...

Leonard: We had, how many kids did we have, about five? Four or five?

Mrs. Cook: We raised six children altogether.

Leonard: In the Depression we only had about four, didn't we?

Mrs. Cook: I guess.

Leonard: I moved camp for a guy out here, a sheep camp, for twenty dollars a month.

Mrs. Cook: Twenty dollars a month and I had five or six children.

MB: Now where did you live?

Mrs. Cook: Well, we had a little home down here in Davis Ward.

Leonard: A piece of ground I bought...

Mrs. Cook: We bought eighty acres of ground.

Leonard: Sagebrush ground. It's just sagebrush. Had to break it up.

MB: Did you farm it?

Mrs. Cook: Yes, we farmed it.

Leonard: As fast as we could get it under cultivation. I had to work away the biggest part of the time. I had to work in one of these sheep outfits.

Mrs. Cook: We raised a garden and orchard, you know.

Leonard: She stayed home and tended the kids and I worked out to the Gilsonite mine. I herded sheep on the mountain, anything I could do.

MB: Sounds like a pretty rough go of it.

Mrs. Cook: It was really. It was rough. We burned kerosene lamps, you know, for light and you'd turn them off pretty early in the evening because you didn't have the oil.

Leonard: We just kept a-workin' and she was a good hand to save, good hand to do. Pretty good guy all around to live with. Ha-ha.

Mrs. Cook: Thank you.

Leonard: Yeah, we kept a-goin' and a-goin'. Finally we got the bank up here. He backed us up a little and that's when we quit workin' for wages. We went to work for ourselves.

MB: Who backed you?

Leonard: The Bank of Vernal, old N. J. Meagher.

MB: N. J. did.

Leonard: Yeah, put up the money for us to buy a ranch down here. It was a pretty good ranch and we started out and got a bunch of sheep and a few cows. We just kept a-goin' and a-goin' from that and then we bought more lambs. We bought up a little more and a little more 'til we were getting along pretty good. Then when they started all this building, then we started to selling land. I used to own this whole damn country, all these houses. All this stuff around through here.

MB: How many acres did you have here?

Leonard: Let's see, had ninety acres on that side of the road and had fifty over here. Had another place out here, had forty-five, another out there, eighty. Had the place ? a hundred and twenty.

MB: You're really not far from Mrs. Holmes, are you?

Mrs. Cook: How far is it from Holmes'?

Leonard: Oh, Isaac, well she lives on...

MB: You're almost adjacent aren't you? I mean did your land you ever touch at one time?

Mrs. Cook: Well, no, there was a quite a bit of ground in between. She's out there about how far? Five, six miles?

Leonard: Let's see, you go down to the second street from this one, then you go straight south there. Yeah, old Joe left her pretty well fixed when he died.

Mrs. Cook: She had about six hundred acres of ground.

Leonard: She had about six, seven hundred acres of ground and had a herd a sheep and a bunch of cattle, a bunch of horses. If she hadn't a-given to them stupid son-of-a-bitchin' kids, and they forget she even lives out there.

Mrs. Cook: She does without water and food. They take her Social Security check. She told me one day, she said, "They don't give me ten dollars worth a month."

Leonard: They even take her Social Security checks and keep that and give her out a little bit. It's a damn shame.

MB: I went there one day and somebody barred me at the door, at the gate and wouldn't let me in. They got confused. They thought I was there to steal their oil rights. I said, "No I'm just here to talk to her," you know, and they wouldn't let me in.

Mrs. Cook: They've got a sign up on the post: No Trespassing.

MB: They ran me plumb off the property. I'd called, but I went back the next day with another girl.

Leonard: Well, that's how crazy the sons-a-bitches is.

Mrs. Cook: One time I went out here a few weeks ago and they had a car right across the driveway, so we had to walk from there on up.

MB: Why, if they had pulled a gun on me, it wouldn't have surprised me at all. I didn't tarry or I got up and left, or I was afraid I would of got shot.

Leonard: They're crazy, but they haven't got guts enough to do that. You should've picked up a club and said, "You sons-a-bitches, just come out here and I'll brain your heads in."

Mrs. Cook: They'd take that old lady out there and they'd just kill her. I don't know how my dad and mother stays in the grave. Looks like they'd come up on the fight.

Leonard: She sold them that place there, as long as he lives there, that orchard and that. I don't know what to do. I ought to go and report them to the Social Security.

Mrs. Cook: They are putting her Social Security in a jackpot and after she's gone, they'll divide it. They ought to be reported, they really should be reported. One day she called up and told me, we were just eating dinner, I said, "Turn on your radio." She said, "I haven't got a radio." I said something about a television and she said, "I haven't got a television." So, I called this girl that was in charge of everything and I told her she needs a radio and she needs a television. In a little bit, she called me back, and she said, "You keep your nose out."

MB: I know what you mean.

Leonard: They did finally go get her a television. Well, they took it through court, see, and got it all put in her... She has jurisdiction. ?? Claiming she wasn't able to take care of her own business and she knows a lot more than they've ever known.

MB: Well, that's too bad. I hate to see that happen.

Mrs. Cook: She sold ground to different ones of the kids, you know, her boys. They put this money, it goes into this jackpot. Well, they'll divide it when the old lady is gone.

MB: It's too bad, but there's not a heck of a lot you can do.

Mrs. Cook: I don't know what a person could do, I really don't. I wish there was something I could do. She doesn't have half enough to eat.

Leonard: Well, a-going out there and taking her little knick-knacks, kinda making over her a little. Hell almighty, you know...

Mrs. Cook: They go over there and make fun of everything. Everything's so filthy and poor, they'll say. Oh, it's just filthy.

Leonard: I told someone, "Why in the hell don't you take her up there in the hills and shoot her like some of those old ewes that gives out. The way you're doin' just starvin' her to death all the time. Why don't you take her out there and shoot her?"

MB: Oh, well. You know you were telling that when Marv backed you for whatever. Was that during the Depression or was that afterwards?

Leonard: Well, that was after. Yeah, I worked out to the Gilsonite mines.

MB: I understand at that time that cash was so tight that people would work for kind. Did they ever pay you in stuff other than money?

Leonard: Oh well, I think a fellow got to go in the Depression when the government took over. They'd let you work about eight or ten days and they'd pay you thirty or forty dollars. But then they had quite a lot of commodities come in from there. Oh, there was a lot of ? and clothing and stuff they used to give people.

MB: Did you ever work for WPA?

Leonard: Oh yeah, hell yes. I've done everything.

MB: What did you think about the New Deal in general?

Leonard: It just saved people's lives that's all. If Roosevelt hadn't gone in and done what he did, you know, we'd a-seen one of the biggest manslaughters you ever saw. People had to eat, they'd gone as far as they could go. They was goin' to eat. People will eat if they have to kill somebody to do it.

MB: Was it to that point in Vernal?

Leonard: You're damn right it was to that point. I'll tell you right now, people had gone just

about as far as they could go. They was right up ready to just, well, what they'd've done, if they hadn't done something, they'd just marched into these stores and took what they had. It was just gettin' to that point where they would have done that. Right out here in this whoopee-dooey country where we are.

MB: Did you vote for Roosevelt?

Leonard: You bet ya, every time he run. I'd still be votin' for him, too.

MB: Have you been Democratic all your life?

Leonard: Yeah, pretty well. I'm not a purebred politician on either side. If I see a good guy in this side and I think I'd rather have him than the other, I vote for him. But the president, I pretty well voted for Democrat. I've run pretty well on the Democrat on the presidency since that time. I even voted for old Carter. We didn't have a hell of a lot of choice. You had to just flip up heads or tails and see what you wanted.

MB: You know, I've heard like during the twenties, the United States, with Prohibition and everything, was pretty rip-roaring. Was it? Did that ever touch Vernal? Were there wild times?

Mrs. Cook: Well, when my dad first come to this country, I don't remember it really. I guess it happened after I was, you know, a kid. But when they had them old outlaws around Vernal...

Leonard: You know, Brown's Park, that was kind of an outlaw rendezvous in that country. They drifted from Wyoming back and forth through here. A lot of them old outlaws ran through here in Vernal. A lot of people knew them and knew who they was.

MB: Did you know any of them?

Leonard: No, I wasn't... About then I heard the folks talking about them. I didn't remember any of them much.

MB: What did you guys think about Prohibition?

Leonard: Well, if they could have enforced it, then it would have been a good thing if they'd've kept Prohibition. But, hell, the racketeers, they took over and they made it 'til it was kind of a mess. Then they voted it back in and they made another mess. So I don't know which was the biggest mess, what they got now or when they had Prohibition.

MB: Was there a lot of moonshine and bootlegging goin' on here?

Leonard: Well, hell almighty, yes, they was making whiskey and everybody had a still pretty near. Made whiskey, peddled it around. Her brother-in-law, I guess.

MB: So you made some yourself?

Leonard: Yeah, I and Jim we made a batch or two.

MB: What were your ingredients?

Leonard: Oh, we took sugar and yeast cakes ? ...

Mrs. Cook: You mean I helped ya?

Leonard: I imagine you did.

Mrs. Cook: I remember one brew you made, that was beer. It was pretty hot stuff.

Leonard: That was beer we made that time. We made a little whiskey. We had an old still.

MB: Where was your still?

Leonard: Oh, hell, we had it...

MB: Wasn't in your kitchen, was it?

Leonard: Yeah, we had it right in the kitchen, didn't we?

Mrs. Cook: Oh, I remember that.

Leonard: Right down to the old Jackson place, we had it in the house there, you know.

MB: Did you just make it for yourself?

Leonard: Yeah, we just made a little fer our own self, we didn't sell any.

MB: Was this corn whiskey?

Leonard: We made it out of sugar and stuff. Yeah.

MB: Did you have barley or corn or something?

Leonard: Sugar. We made it with sugar and hops and stuff. I don't know. He handled more of that end of it. I don't remember, but we used sugar and distilled it.

MB: Was it good?

Leonard: Oh hell, it was like that old bootleg stuff. Somethin' to make you crazy.

Mrs. Cook: There was one family made bootleg whiskey, you know, and they killed my cousin. It was just strictly poison, I guess.

MB: Who made it?

Mrs. Cook: His name was Jones.

MB: Would it have had lead poisoning in it?

Mrs. Cook: I don't know just what they figured was wrong. He was a grown kid, you know. He was quite an outstanding boy, too, but they got him to drink some of this junk and it killed him.

MB: What was his name?

Mrs. Cook: Golden Slaugh.

MB: Did many people die from drinking in those days?

Leonard: No, I never knew of any. ? old man Amie, he could drink it, that old feller.

MB: What was his name?

Leonard: Amie, I don't remember his first... What was his first name?

MB: Was it something Amie

Mrs. Cook: Amie was his last name. What was his first name?

MB: Was he an Italian immigrant?

Mrs. Cook: Yes, he was an Italian.

Leonard: His daughter lives right down here on center...

Mrs. Cook: Marie Smuin.

MB: Marie Smuin.

Leonard: There's two Marie Smuins. One lives on this corner and the Amy-Marie lives on the other corner. The sister-in-law.

MB: What's her husband's name?

Leonard: They have both died off. They are both named Marie.

MB: That's how it would be in the phone book?

Mrs. Cook: Well, in the phone book this ? Marie, her name is Mrs.? Marie.

Leonard: She's kinda dark. We call one blackberry and one whiteberry. Ha-ha. You wouldn't told them that to their face.

MB: Was this Mr. Amie quite a character?

Mrs. Cook: Well, he died a long time ago.

Leonard: He was the nicest old guy you ever met. He had, oh, I don't know how many kids. He was an old miner. He used to mine a lot. He came out here and tried to homestead, but he couldn't make it, he had a hard time. He got to makin' a little whiskey, and all these guys around here, these guys from Siddoway's outfit, used to buy whiskey from him. Old Ralph and his brother's.

MB: Did they drink?

Leonard: Yeah, ? he never drew a sober breath him whole life. I don't believe.

MB: I'll have to ask him about that.

Leonard: Yeah, he knows how to do it. He knows a lot about it, all of his life. He could make whiskey out of anything, grain, fruits or anything.

MB: Did the church approach that pretty strongly at that time?

Leonard: Oh yeah. There was one old feller over here on LaPaz. He was Baptist...